



PO Box 29242 San Francisco, CA 94903 www.uri.org office@uri.org ph:+1.415.561.2300 fax:+1.415.561.2313

NEWS RELEASE

Release After: February 27, 2004

Contact: Sarah Talcott, URI Youth Programs – 415-561-2300

UNITED RELIGIONS INITIATIVE MOBILIZES FAITH COMMUNITIES TO REDUCE YOUTH VIOLENCE

United Religions Initiative (URI), working as the Religious Sector Sponsor for the National Youth Violence Prevention Campaign, invites faith communities and interfaith groups across the U.S. to participate in National Youth Violence Prevention Week March 29 through April 2. This educational and awareness-raising event focuses on effective ways to prevent and reduce youth violence. People from all sectors of society are encouraged to join in activities that demonstrate the positive role young people can play in making their schools and communities safer.

Each day of the week focuses on a specific violence prevention strategy. These strategies include promoting respect and tolerance, anger management, resolving conflicts peacefully, supporting safety, and uniting in action.

United Religions Initiative will be mobilizing its members, as well as reaching out to faith communities and interfaith groups across the country, to join in activities of solidarity and education. To find out more about how your faith or interfaith community can get involved, visit URI's website at: www.uri.org/youth/vpc. URI offers specific activities and resources for addressing and resolving issues of religiously motivated violence, intolerance or bullying.



Participating schools will host in-school violence prevention conferences on the campaign's "Unite In Action Day" scheduled for Friday, April 2nd. These conferences will offer workshops on various prevention strategies and recognize local efforts by those who are working to reduce youth violence. The conferences will also provide opportunities to establish local community roundtables and develop action plans to reduce youth violence throughout the year. URI encourages its US-based Cooperation Circles (member groups), Affiliates and supporters to consider joining or hosting a local community roundtable.

The Campaign is presented by the National Students Against Violence Everywhere and The Guidance Channel. The Campaign's Strategy Sponsors, including Teaching Tolerance, American School Counselor Association, Association For Conflict Resolution, National Youth Court Center, and Youth Service America, also offer activities, information, and spokespersons to support each day's focus through the campaign website, www.ViolencePreventionWeek.org.

The award-winning campaign website at www.ViolencePreventionWeek.org serves as the headquarters for all those involved in the event. The site also provides everything needed to promote and prepare for the event, including the official campaign Action Kit that serves as a step-by-step planning guide.

United Religions Initiative works to end religiously motivated violence and build cultures of peace, justice and healing. Active in 50 countries, URI's work is accomplished by an active network of more than 230 Cooperation Circles (CCs), grassroots groups of at least 7 people from 3 or more faith traditions. Each year URI activities involve hundreds of thousands of peacebuilders worldwide.